

ON Sunday the 20th of September, 1772, Mr. EVANSON read Part of the Nicene Creed in an ironical Manner, so as to convey the utmost Contempt and Ridicule thereof, particularly of these Words, *God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God*,—upon which the two following Letters passed.

Copy of a Letter to Mr. EVANSON from THOMAS KEMBLE, Esq; and others, penned by HENRY COLLET, Esq;

S I R,

Tewkesbury, Sept. 30, 1772.

IT is with great Concern that we find it necessary, on Behalf of ourselves and many others, Inhabitants of this Parish, who constantly attend Divine Service at Church on Sundays, of observing to you, that notwithstanding your solemn Assent to the Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, as directed by the Act of the 13th and 14th of CHARLES II. when you first took Possession of the Living of this Place, we have too much Reason to believe, from the Alteration you constantly make in the Apostles Creed, your Omission of Words in other Parts of the Service, and the indecent Manner in which you read the Nicene Creed, that either your Assent was not at first real, or if it was, that you have now withdrawn such Assent. If you truly adhere to the Doctrine of the *established Church*, of which you profess yourself to be a Minister, it is our earnest Request and Desire, that when you perform Divine Service for the future, you will read it in the Manner as set forth in the said Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, as enjoined and established by the above-mentioned Act; which Request if you refuse to comply with, however disagreeable it may be, we shall think it our Duty to take such Steps as will put it in our Power to have once more for our Minister a real and sincere Member of the Church of *England*, and who will not, in the Capacity of a Minister, set up his own Notions, in Opposition to the established Tenets of that Church in which he is ordained. We are, Sir,

Your Well-wishers,

THO. KEMBLE,
H. COLLET,
NEAST HAVARD.
WM. CLIFFE,
SAM. JEYNES,
W. COLLET.

*To the Rev. Mr. EVANSON, Vicar
of Tewkesbury, in the County
of Gloucester.*

Copy of Letter from Mr. EVANSON to Mr. KEMBLE and others.

GENTLEMEN,

AS I am yet to learn that any Steps which you can take will put it in your Power, either to vacate this Living, or, when it is

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vacant,

vacant, to appoint such a Minister as you may think proper. I was not a little surprized at the Receipt of your most extraordinary *Command* (for surely it is very improperly stiled a *Request* and *Desire* when accompanied with a very rude Threatening); and if the Channel through which I received it, and the several Hand-Writings subscribed to it, had not put it beyond a Doubt, I could not have believed that a Letter, in one Part speaking false *English*, and in another breathing so illiberal a Menace, was really sent me by the Gentlemen whose Names it bears.

As a Man I should not think it deserved my least Regard; but as a Minister, and, as far as a well-intending Heart will carry me, a faithful Minister too of the meek and patient Jesus, I acknowledge myself under an *Obligation* not only to reply to, but to remove every *Objection* ~~which~~ may be urged against my Conduct, if I can do it consistently with what the Gospel of Christ, and my own Conscience, tell me is my Duty to God.

In the Close of your Letter, you are pleased to insinuate, that *in the Capacity of a Minister*, I set up my own Notions in Opposition to the established Tenets of the Church; as you have not alledged one Proof of my doing so, I can only say, that the Insinuation does me great Injustice. I never did, in any Act of my Ministry among you, set up *an Opinion of my own*, in Opposition to an established Doctrine. About a Year and a Half ago indeed, in an almost literal Paraphrase upon *1 Cor. 15*. I ventured, in the Course of what I thought my Duty, to point out from the Pulpit, the Inconsistency of that Article of the *Apostles Creed*, the *Resurrection of the Body*, with the express Words of the inspired Apostle, who, speaking of the *Resurrection of the Dead*, says, "Thou sowest not that *Body*, which shall be;" and again tells us, "It is a *natural Body* which is sown, but it is a *spiritual Body* which is raised." But since then I have not done even so much as that. However knowing that no such Expression as "the Resurrection of the *Body*" is to be found in the whole New Testament, and that it is very far from the plain Doctrines of the Holy Apostles, from which *that Creed* is most certainly taken in all its other Parts, that I may be able to join in the Rehearsal of the *whole Creed* myself, not merely officially, but with my Heart and Understanding, as well as with my Lips, I take the very trifling Liberty of exchanging one single unscripural Word for a scriptural one; and since every Member of the Congregation rehearses separately for himself, and is entirely free to adhere to the Word *Body*, without any Regard either to St. Paul or me, surely it is cavilling for mere cavilling Sake, to be offended with so innocent and inconsiderable a Deviation from the printed Form, especially when it is made purely for Conscience Sake, and when the Word I adopt is the very same that our Church herself hath made use of in her own Nicene Creed.

You imagine I do not now *at least* assent and truly adhere to the *Doctrine* of the established Church; as you do not say *Doctrines*, I suppose you mean the general *Doctrine* of the Church, for in Truth her particular *Doctrines* happen very unfortunately to be, some of them, directly contradictory to one another; with a partial View to one of these you accuse me of not being one of her sincere Members; and a methodistical Minister of the *established*



established Church, having his Eye upon another of them, would accuse each of you of the same Thing. But let us see how the Church herself qualifies the Meaning of all her particular Doctrines, in that general Doctrine which true Protestants must universally approve; if you will please to read over the 6th, 19th, 20th, and 21st Articles of the established Religion candidly and coolly, you will find that the Church herself acknowledges no Rule of Faith and religious Doctrine besides the Holy Scriptures, disowns the Infallibility of every Church in the World, and disclaims all Authority in herself to enjoin any Article of Faith or any Doctrine, which is repugnant to, or which is not actually contained in, that sacred Standard; unless therefore the Church is by her own Confession very wicked and unreasonable, as well as very inconsistent with herself, she cannot be supposed to require any Person to assent or adhere to her particular Doctrines, any farther than as upon a fair and candid Examination they shall be found to accord with the true Sense of those Holy Writings, and so far I do, *bona fide*, still assent and adhere to them.

As to the *Nicene Creed* it is really beyond my Comprehension, and therefore I read it merely *ex officio*, and in Obedience to the Authority of the Legislature; and if I have offended any body by running it over too fast, I will very readily endeavour to read it slower.

In every other Part of the public Service, where the Congregation is at all concerned, I mean where they can with any Degree of Propriety be supposed to join, I am from the same Motives punctiliously cautious not to alter or omit one single Word; and even in the Acts of Blessing and Exhorting, where the Part of the People is only to receive my good Wishes or Instructions, and where I look upon myself more as the Servant and Ambassador of Jesus Christ, than as the legal Minister of the People, I never presume to introduce one Syllable, that is not authorized by the Church itself; and if I do omit a Word or two of the printed Forms, it is really because, after maturely considering the solemn and intelligible Engagements which I entered into when I was ordained Priest, which it is both my Duty and Inclination punctually to fulfil, and which I earnestly recommend to your attentive Perusal, as they are contained in the Ordination Service, *I dare not use them*. In this and every other Part of my public Ministry, I act upon an unfeigned Principle of Conscience, and for my Justification I appeal to that awful final Court of perfect Equity, before which you, Gentlemen, must appear as well as I, and where we shall find, we must all answer more for our Practice and our Behaviour to each other, than for our Opinions.

I am no Friend to auricular Confessions, even of the Laity to the Clergy, and much less of the Clergy to the Laity; and I ought perhaps to be particularly cautious what I avow on this Occasion, where a Combination seems formed against me, consisting chiefly of Gentlemen learned in the Law; yet I frankly declare to you, that I am one of those many Ministers of the established Church, whose Eyes have been opened by that attentive Study of the Holy Scriptures, and other Writings of the earliest Ages of the Church of Christ, which our Profession particularly requires of us, and who are convinced, that *all is not right in the present Establishment*, but that there is much Need of a Reformation both of the Liturgy and the Articles. You cannot

be ignorant that this Matter is actually *sub judice*; it will assuredly come before the Legislature the next Sessions of Parliament, when something or other must be determined on, and I assure you if my Objections to the legal Forms of Divine Service are not then removed by Authority, I will very soon rid you of all your Objections to my Ministry. Six or seven Months is surely no long Time for you, who are so strong in the right Faith, to bear with the conscientious Scruples of a weak Brother. But if your Christian Patience and Charity is too little, and your Bigotry and party Zeal too great, to live peaceably with me for that short Time, you are at full Liberty to take what Steps you please, and pursue every Measure in your Power to my Prejudice; and whether the Effects of your *holy* Resentment prove as considerable as you are pleased to threaten, or as trifling as I apprehend, may God forgive you, as I shall do very sincerely.

I am, GENTLEMEN,

Your very humble and faithful Servant in Christ Jesus,

Tewkesbury, Oct. 1, 1772. EDW. EVANSON.

To Messrs. KEMBLE, COLLET, HAVARD,
CLIFFE, JEYNES, and COLLET.

Sunday the 4th of October, 1772, Mr. EVANSON read only the first Sentence of the Nicene Creed to the Word *Invisible*, which occasioned much Confusion in the Congregation. Some of them immediately quitted the Church.

By this Time Mr. EVANSON made several Alterations and Omissions in Divine Service, particularly in the Sacramental Service. In the Exhortation he omitted the Words, *both God and Man*, and in the Blessing these Words, *the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*.

Mrs. TAYLOR, a Gentlewoman of Fortune and respectable Character, who had been a constant Communicant, but on Account of such Omissions had for some Time absented herself from receiving the Sacrament, on the 21st of December, 1772, sent a Message to Mr. EVANSON by Mrs. BLANCH, the Sexton's Wife of Tewkesbury Parish, to know if he administered the Sacrament himself on *Christmas-Day*, 1772, and that in case he did, if he would permit any other Clergyman to administer the Sacrament the Month afterwards, to which Mr. EVANSON returned the following Answer in Writing.

Monday, December 21, 1772.

Mr. EVANSON presents his Compliments to Mrs. TAYLOR, and, in Answer to her Enquiry about the *Sacrament*, acquaints her, that he intends administering it himself on *Friday* next, and every succeeding *Sacrament-Day*, being perfectly satisfied that no Person, who is *properly qualified* to receive it at all, can have the *least* Objection to receive it at his Hands, however his Opinions may be condemned by those, who may think themselves better

Judges

Judges of such Matters than he is, as to his own Conduct on such Occasions, God, who sees all Hearts, knows that he acts only according to what he thinks to be his Duty to God, and to his Saviour whom he sincerely loves.

To Mrs. TAYLOR.

The Gentlemen who wrote to Mr. EVANSON had not the least Idea but that he meant by his Answer to resign his Living, if the Legislature made no Alteration in the Liturgy; no Suit therefore was commenced 'till after the following Letters had passed. The first of which was not sent 'till after the Prorogation of Parliament; but in the mean Time some of the Gentlemen retained and consulted Advocates and Proctors, in order to be prepared in Case they should not find Mr. EVANSON inclined to keep his Promise, which was suspected, and the Event fully justified the Suspicion.

Copy of Letter from Mr. KEMBLE and others to Mr. EVANSON.

S I R,

Tewkesbury, July 3*, 1773.

WE have waited with Christian Patience and Charity from the Receipt of your extraordinary Letter of the 1st of October last to this Time, and the Session of Parliament being ended, and no Alteration having been made by Authority in the legal Forms of Divine Service, we now call upon you to perform the Promise which you therein made us, "That if your Objections to the legal Forms of Divine Service were not removed by Authority, you would very soon rid us of all our Objections to your Ministry."

We are

Your injured Parishioners,

THO. KEMBLE,
H. COLLET,
NEAST HAVARD,
SAM. JEYNES,
WM. CLIFFE,

*To the Rev. Mr. EVANSON, Vicar
of Tewkesbury, in the County
of Gloucester.*

Copy of Letter from Mr. EVANSON to Mr. KEMBLE and others.

GENTLEMEN,

IF Christian Patience consists in Endeavours to excite the Animosity of my Parishioners against me, in meditating and menacing a Prosecution, in employing Proctors and consulting Advocates, in complaining to my Diocesan, and even soliciting him to commence a Prosecution of me in his Courts, you have very truly waited with *Christian Patience*. If every possible Mark of Dislike and Malice, if even your neglecting your Duty to God out of mere personal Resentment to me, can be called *Christian Charity*, that is to say, sincere Love, you have indeed displayed a very considerable Share of it, since the Date of my *extraordinary Answer* to your at least as extraordinary a Letter of the 30th of September. In that Letter (which contained *all the Objections*

* The Day the London Papers were delivered in Tewkesbury, with Advice of the Parliament being prorogued.

you were pleased to make to my Ministry, and which I in reply promised to rid you of;) you objected to my making "an Alteration in the Apostle's Creed, and Omission of Words in other Parts of the Service;" and with a Threat of depriving me of my Living, requested, "that when I performed Divine Service for the future, I would read it in the Manner as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, as enjoined and established by the Act of the 13th and 14th of CHA. II." *Qui facit per alium, Gentlemen, facit per se;* and therefore as I was satisfied some Months ago, that the Legislature would not remove my Objections to certain Passages in the Liturgy, I took care, at an Expence which my Preferment will very ill afford, to procure such a Supply for both my Churches as should fulfil my Promise to you, and remove every Ground of the like Complaint for the Time to come. And as Divine Service hath been performed regularly according to the Act of Uniformity for more than three Months past, without the Omission or Alteration of a single Tittle that I know of, it is not in my Power to rid you of the Objections you made to my Manner of ministring in the Divine Service, in any more effectual Method than I have already done.

You stile yourselves *my injured Parishioners.* Indeed, Gentlemen, my Conscience does not reproach me with having ever injured you in the minutest Degree; but if I have done it inadvertently, and you will inform me what the Injury is of which I am guilty, I will very readily, as my Christian Duty requires, make you a Reparation to the utmost of my Abilities. In the mean while you must give me Leave to say, that as you have thought fit to withdraw your usual Payments for the Afternoon Sermon, tho' I suppose Part of all your Families constantly attend, unless I receive an Equivalent for the Tythe of your several Gardens, &c. and your *Easter Offerings*, I shall have Reason, in my Turn, to complain of real Injustice, which I take to be as irreconcileable to true Christianity, as angry Resentment and Persecution for Conscience' Sake. I am,

GENTLEMEN,

Your very humble Servant,

Tewkesbury, July 3, 1773.

EDW^d. EVANSON.

To Messrs. KEMBLE, COLLET, HAVARD,
JEYNES, and CLIFFE.

*Copy of Mr. STOCK's Letter to Mr. HAVARD, in Answer to
Mr. EVANSON's Insinuation.*

S I R,

Glocester, July 4, 1773.

NEITHER Mr. PHILLIPPS or myself did ever make any Complaint on your Parts to the Bishop about Mr. EVANSON, nor did either of us ever, directly or indirectly, solicit the Bishop to prosecute him, nor was it ever thought of being done without a Promoter. I am

Your very humble Servant,

JN^o. SKINNER STOCK.

Mr. HAVARD, Tewkesbury.

Copy

Copy of a Letter from Mr. HAVARD to Mr. EVANSON.

S I R,

You make a Demand upon me for Tythes of my Garden, &c. and Easter Offerings, without stating to me how your Right arises; when you acquaint me in what Capacity you claim Tythes, &c. I will soon afterwards communicate to you my Resolution on that Head.

By your Jesuitical Letter of the 3d Instant, the Cause assigned for your Claim of Tythes, &c. is my withdrawing my usual Payment for the Afternoon Sermon. Permit me to tell you, I chearfully contributed my Mite, whilst your Conduct was consistent with the Character of a Clergyman of the Church of *England*, without the least Intention of exonerating myself of the Payment of Dues, that you might be otherwise justly entitled to, and consequently shall not admit, that my Subscription for an Afternoon's Sermon was in Lieu of Tythes and *Easter Offerings*. My Family, if they attend Divine Service in an Afternoon, to which they are entitled, and that Right I mean to support, must go to the Parish Church of *Tewkesbury*, and notwithstanding at present I consider that Church converted into a Conventicle when you officiate, yet it is still the only Church we have in this Place.

As for my own Part, I take this Opportunity to inform you, that my Intention is not in future to attend Divine Service upon any Occasion, when you are to perform the whole or Part of it—not actuated thereto by personal Resentment to you, as you injuriously assert; I solemnly declare I have none, but am governed by my Conscience, that tells me, after I have heard so many of your Antichristian Discourses, and Part of the Service read by you in the Churfh, in the most indecent, irreverent Manner, I am right in absenting myself when a Man of your Principles officiates.

I observe you are artfully endeavouring to charge myself, and others, your Parishioners, with a *Persecution*. Let me ask you as one of them, If I have in any Respect forfeited the Protection of the Laws of my Country; I am not conscious to myself I have in any Instance; and yet you, with all your pretended Charity, Meekness, and Moderation, have, in direct Violation of such Laws, under the old canting Pretence of Conscience-Sake, robbed and deprived me of the Enjoyment of my Religion, the established Religion too of my Country, and that is the Injury I complain you have done me. Let me tell you, Sir, I think myself happy in having been educated a Member of the Church of *England*; recollect, I have a Conscience as well as you; to you therefore, and to your unchristian, uncharitable, and bigoted Spirit, can only be imputed the present Uneasiness subsisting in this Parish, and which is more likely to be increased by your implacable Behaviour. You found this Church in Peace, and you are the common Disturber of it; nor do I know any other Reparation you can make us, than by an immediate Resignation of the Vicarage of *Tewkesbury*, which will demonstrate that you are the truly conscientious Man; and 'till that Act is voluntarily done, I shall consider you in the same Light I always shall any Man in my own Profession, who receives his Client's Deeds and Papers, pockets large Fees, and acquires a comfortable Subsistence by his Client, and then betrays him. I am

Your much-injured Parishioner,

Tewkesbury, July 5, 1773.

NEAST HAVARD.

I must add my Wish, that you paid some Regard to Facts. Your Assertion of a Complaint having been made to your Diocesan, and of his being solicited to commence a Prosecution of you in his Court, is, so far as I can speak for myself, false, and I refer you to a Copy of my Proctor, Mr. STOCK's Letter, inclosed herein, for the Truth of my Assertion.

To the Rev. Mr. EVANSON, in Tewkesbury.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. EVANSON to Mr. HAVARD.

S I R,

IF you are either a Christian or a Gentleman, when the Rage of your Party Zeal is a little abated, you will be sensible that the abusive Language and illiberal Invectives of your Letter of the 5th are as unbecoming you to use, as they are unmerited and unprovoked by me. If they were not dictated by that personal Resentment you disclaim, it is impossible for me to account for them. I am sure Conscience and the Religion of Jesus Christ can never teach any Man to render railing for good Words.

You are as well acquainted with my Title to the Oblations and small Tythes of this Town as I am myself. You know, Sir, that in all this Neighbourhood, both they and the Great Tythes belonged to the Monastery of *Tewkesbury*, and after the Dissolution were parcelled out by the Crown to many different Grantees, of which the Family of GEERS had the Portion arising from the Town of *Tewkesbury*, by whom it was devised to the Minister of this Parish, in the same Manner as I apprehend the Portions of *Treddington*, &c. were devised by other Grantees to the Support of the Alms-Houses at *Bredon*. But as nothing can be more obvious than that the small Tythes of a Town must be very inconsiderable, and that the *Easter* Offerings of all such as one could think of collecting them from, would amount but to very little, so long as the Inhabitants continued to contribute liberally to the half-yearly Collections, it seemed imprudent to run the Risk of disgusting them by a Demand which, tho' just, they had not been used to, and consequently of losing more in one Way than might be acquired in another; but when Gentlemen of the first Property in the Town refuse to contribute any Thing, the Case is very greatly altered. However, tho' I was drawn in by your Complaint of Injury to mention my own Right, and the Circumstance of such Gentlemen withdrawing their Support from an Institution which they must be sensible is of Use to their own Servants, and many others who cannot attend in the Morning, yet I did not mean it as a Demand, and was very far from desiring or even thinking it right, that any Person should on that Account absent himself from Church. Indeed I am sorry I have had Occasion to say so much about a pecuniary Matter; which it is not my present Intention to contest with any Body. In the Case between us a much larger Sum than the Amount of all your Dues and Subscriptions together is not an Object worth my Consideration; and it is but Justice to you, Sir, to say, that I am fully satisfied it would not influence your Conduct.

As to your supposed Application to my Diocesan, and whatever you may be pleased to think of me, I am no more capable of wilfully asserting or insinuating a false Fact than Mr. HAVARD

is,

is, but I spoke upon what I thought the best Authority that could be, the Word of the Bishop himself. If you will ask Mr. DAVIES, who brought me the Message that occasioned my waiting upon his Lordship, you will find that he understood it in the same Light, nay, what is more, so did the Bishop too, and after what passed between his Lordship and me upon the Subject, if I had not seen Mr. STOCK at Cheltenham before I received your Letter, I must have concluded that either he or the Bishop was a most egregious Falsifier. But I find your Proctor took Occasion, from his Connections with the Bishop, to lay the whole Affair before him, even your Case to Dr. HARRIS, with the Dr's. Answer; that he consulted with his Lordship, whether it would be right for him to take an active Part in the Prosecution, or only to act officially; and also that he hath very lately acquainted him with a most infamous Falshood, respecting my Conversation with his Lordship, which some of you handed to him upon no better Grounds than the Misrepresentations of popular Report. And as he now declares he did all this of himself, without any Directions from you, you to be sure are entirely exculpated; but I leave you to judge what I must think of a Proctor, who thus unfairly tries to prejudice the Judge on one Side, before the Suit is commenced, and even to make him a Party in a Cause intended to be brought before him.

Your Charge against me of "depriving you of the Enjoyment of your Religion" because from a Disapprobation of my Preaching you are determined never to come to Church when I preach, is truly pleasant. You might as well hold your Breath and say I deprived you of the *Enjoyment* of the Air, the one is just as much in my Power to do, as the other; and both the Charges would be equally reasonable and well founded. If you will satisfy me that the Majority of the Parishioners wish me not to do any more Duty in this Church, it will be a very strong Inducement to me to gratify their Desires; but whilst I have great Reason to think the Case is directly the reverse, tho' I am ready to allow you and your Associates as much Dignity and Importance as is your due, I cannot think that the Voices of Half a Dozen, or perhaps fifty People, ought to prevail over those of Hundreds. After my giving up at least 40 Guineas a Year out of my scanty Pittance, purely from Principles of Conscience, I thought no Man could have doubted longer of my Sincerity; but since no Man is to be my Judge in Cases that relate to Conscience only, it is indifferent to me what you or any other Man may think of me. For my own Part, I have considered my Situation as impartially as I am able to do; and upon the Footing I have now placed the Duty of my Churches, I cannot see one good Reason for resigning my Livings, and if I did, the Laws of my Country have put it out of my Power to maintain myself in any other Station, and consequently out of my Power to resign what I have at present.

If you can amuse yourself with such *professional* Similitudes as you closed your Letter with, you are heartily welcome to the Entertainment; but in Truth, Sir, you are no Client of mine, I neither expect, nor desire a Fee from you; nor have I been employed or entrusted by you in any Respect whatever.

By Means of a Series of singular and providential Incidents, I was appointed by the Lord Chancellor to preach in this Place, *not*

the incoherent Nonsense of ignorant Superstition, but the true and rational Word of God. That Word, was all I received Authority to preach, when I was ordained Priest; and so long as I perform the solemn Vow and Promise I then made at the Altar, viz. "To instruct the People committed to my Charge, out of the Holy Scriptures, and to teach them nothing as necessary to Salvation, but that which *I am persuaded* may be concluded and proved by the Scripture," I have a just Claim to the legal Endowments of this Vicarage; and do not in any Sense betray the Trust committed to me. But if influenced by your *Interposition*, I should either decline instructing my Parishioners altogether, or teach them what *I am persuaded* is contrary to the true Sense of Scripture; I fear it would be but a poor Excuse, when my Heavenly King and Judge should call me to account for neglecting to discharge the important Duties of such a solemn Engagement in his Service, to urge that Messrs. HAVARD, &c. did not chuse I should perform them.

What Name might have been given to your Prosecution if I had not removed every Cause of the Complaint you at first made, I know not; but as Things are now circumstanced, I fancy, all unprejudiced People would call it by the same Apellation that I have done. If you think the mere Sanction of the Laws can alter the Nature of Persecution, you are very greatly mistaken. No Persecution could ever have been publicly carried on without the self same Cover, "We have a *Law*, and by *our Law* he ought to die," was the ostensible Mask of religious Persecution, in the first Instance of it, against the Life of our blessed Saviour himself, and it hath continued invariably the same from his Time to the Days of

Your humble Servant,

Tewkesbury, July 7, 1773. EDW^d. EVANSON.

To NEAST HAVARD, Esq; Tewkesbury.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. HAVARD to Mr. EVANSON.

SIR,

In my Letter of the 5th Inst. I delivered you my Sentiments openly, and as became an honest Man; in Return, I have your long tedious Epistle, well fraught with pious Cant and Evasion. My Letter you cannot answer. I am entertained with the Account you give me of the Bishop and our Proctor. I will only add, when you were charging your injured Parishioners with Malice and personal Resentment, the Addition of a further Falshood was no great Matter for a *scrupulous, conscientious* Man to make. I find depriving a Man of the Enjoyment of his Religion is in your Opinion truly *pleasant*. Very pious and conscientious indeed. I do not by any Means admit your Calculation, of having a Majority of the Parishioners in Favour of your Doctrines; that you have done much Mischief amongst us I believe, but Christianity is not yet abolished in this Parish by your unchristian Discourses and Publications. The Laws of your Country, I aver, have not put it out of your Power to maintain yourself in any other Station; the Toleration Act is in your Favour; and as your new-fangled Religion is a Mixture of the Christian, Jew, Mahometan, and Heathen, it will, like Baron VAN HAAKE's Composition for manuring Land (which he tells

us

us has the Powers of the four Elements) render you very plentiful Crops, far superior to the Vicarage of Tewkesbury.

You tell me by Means of a Series of singular and providential Incidents you were appointed by the Lord Chancellor to preach in this Place, &c. Pray, Sir, did his Lordship tack to your Appointment a special Commission, empowering you to vilify the established Church of *England*, and treat her Members as Papists and Idolaters? Does it go so far as to authorize you to go from House to House and declare, that her Service is a Jargon of inconsistent * Nonsense and Blasphemy, and the Church most corrupt? I am inclined to think otherwise. If his Lordship did, produce your Commission.

Upon the whole, you never will make a Proselyte of me, nor will the *Infallibility of Pope EVANSON* be established in this Place, 'till you convince us your *Infallibility* is consistent with common Honesty.—So much for Religion.

Pursuant to my Promise I communicate to you my Resolution respecting your Claim of Tythes and *Easter Offerings*. As Minister of *Tewkesbury* I do not admit your Claim to the Tythes, Oblations, and Obventions; and in Case you insist upon such Right as *Minister*, my Determination is to controvert that Matter with you. My Subscription for an Afternoon Sermon was never yet paid in Lieu of Tythes and *Easter Offerings*, nor do I believe any other Inhabitant of this Place ever considered the Payment in that Light. In the Church of *Tewkesbury* is a Person described to be the Reader or Assistant to the *Curate of Tewkesbury*, and such Reader or Assistant is in the Appointment of the Corporation of this Borough. The Readership and Curacy have not been always enjoyed by the same Person, but held as distinct Offices, which was the Case when Mr. GEERS settled the Tythes, &c. by *Deed*. Mr. PEARCE was then Reader, and (I think) Master of the Free School, but never was Minister of this Place as I apprehend. You have the Appointment of the Readership from the Corporation, and in that Capacity I admit your Right to the privy Tythes and *Easter Offerings*, and I acknowledge myself indebted to you for them from the Date of your Appointment, and will instantly pay your reasonable and just Demand. For the future you, as *Reader*, are welcome to take my Tythes, &c. in Kind, or, if more agreeable to you to accept of a Composition, I will pay it. I do not mean to invade your's or any other Man's Property. Mr. GEER's Settlement I found this Morning, and will send you an Abstract of it, and the Deed at any Time may be inspected in my Office. I am sorry I have so much Reason to subscribe myself

Your injured Parishioner,

Tewkesbury, July 8, 1773. NEAST HAVARD.

To the Rev. Mr. EVANSON.

Copy of a Note on a Card from Mr. EVANSON to Mr. HAVARD.

Mr. EVANSON presents Compliments to Mr. HAVARD, and returns him Thanks for correcting his Mistake about the Person to whom the Tythes, &c. were devised; as also for his obliging Promise of sending him an Abstract of the Deed: In looking

* Mr. EVANSON's Expression deposed to by two Witnesses.

amongst

amongst the Papers in his own Custody, respecting this Living, he finds he already has a Copy of the Deed at large; and therefore takes the Liberty of addressing Mr. HAVARD once more to prevent him the Trouble of making an Abstract of it.

Thursday Night, July 8.

N. B. The Toleration Act requires Subscription to the Articles, which E. E. would not subscribe again for the Primacy.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. STOCK to Mr. HAVARD.

S I R,

Glocester, 20th July, 1773.

I have read Mr. EVANSON's of the 7th Inst. on which I have a few Remarks to make, which I should have sent you before, but that I have not had Time.

I told you before that I never did directly or indirectly *apply* to the Bishop to carry on the Prosecution against him. He now brings a new Charge against me, in Answer to which I say as follows: I never did *consult* with his Lordship whether it would be right for him to take an active Part in the Prosecution, or only to act officially. The *infamous Falshood* he talks of, when he specifies, I will answer; I know of none such. I neither have *tried*, nor do *wish* to prejudice the Judge against Mr. EVANSON before the Suit is commenced; nor did I ever directly or indirectly *try to make him a Party in the Cause intended to be brought before him*. And I further assure you that I said nothing to Mr. EVANSON, at Cheltenham, that could in the least warrant the Assertions he has made in his Letter to you, respecting me. The Inferences he pretended to draw from that Conversation, convince me that he can make a *Text* answer his Purpose at any Time *some how or other*.

In respect to the last Paragraph of his Letter, he told me that he thought his keeping a Curate ought to satisfy his Opponents, or something to that Effect. To this I made little or no Answer, because the Answer I should have made would have seemed harsh to myself to have given Face to Face, as I was at one Time acquainted with Mr. EVANSON and liked him; but I designed to have wrote to him my Sentiments upon the Matter, in order to have prevented any Conversation of that Kind in future, or my being desired at any Time to recommend a Compromise, which I could not in my own Judgment, or in my own Conscience, approve of. You know my Sentiments to be, that it is inconsistent with Religion, or even with common Sense, that a Man should be a public Minister, or a Minister at all, in any Church or religious Society, the Language of whose public Worship he declares his Conscience will not suffer him to make use of, and some of whose most solemn and sacred Doctrines he avows to disbelieve, and has even treated with Ridicule. I think no Satisfaction can be given by Mr. EVANSON but a Declaration, and that full, that he has changed his Opinions from what he lately held, to those of the established Church, and that he will in future conform to the Doctrines and Liturgy of the same Church; or else a voluntary Resignation of his Ministry. I am, &c.

JNO. SKINNER STOCK.

To Mr. HAVARD, in Tewkesbury.